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Letter dated 26 July 2002 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Please find attached the assessment of the work of the Security Council during the presidency of the Syrian Arab Republic in June 2002 (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have this letter and the attached assessment circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Mikhail **Wehbe**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 26 July 2002 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Assessment of the work of the Security Council during the presidency of the Syrian Arab Republic (June 2002)

During the Syrian Arab Republic's presidency of the Security Council in June, the Council held seven formal meetings, six public meetings, two private meetings and three meetings with troop-contributing countries. Its members met on 19 occasions for consultations.

In June, the Council adopted five resolutions and issued one presidential statement, and the President was authorized on seven occasions to make statements to the press on behalf of Council members.

The Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Syrian Arab Republic, Farouk Al-Shara', presided over a private meeting held by the Council to consider the situation in the Middle East and a public meeting on the situation in Afghanistan.

Africa

Burundi

At the consultations on 24 June, the Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Tuliameni Kalomoh, briefed the members of the Council on Burundi, stressing the need to urge all the parties to stop the fighting and give the facilitators a chance to pursue their efforts to achieve a ceasefire. Following the consultations, the President made a statement to the press in which he repeated that the members of the Security Council encouraged the facilitation, the United Republic of Tanzania and the region to continue efforts aimed at helping the belligerents to reach a ceasefire agreement; urged the armed groups to cooperate with regional efforts; expressed appreciation to South Africa for providing the protecting unit for exiled leaders; reminded the parties of their obligations under international humanitarian law to condemn and end all attacks against all civilians; encouraged the Government to pursue constructive dialogue within the transitional institutions; and urged donors to provide immediate humanitarian and development assistance to Burundi.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

In consultations on 4 June Council members wer briefed by the Under-Secretary-General fo Peacekeeping Operations, Jean-Marie Guéhenno, o the incidents in Kisangani in which staff of the Unite Nations Organization Mission in the Democrati Republic of the Congo (MONUC) had been assaulte by members of the Rassemblement congolais pour l démocratie (RCD-Goma), as well as RCD Goma' expulsion of MONUC from RCD Goma-controlle territory, and its ban on the Special Representative o the Secretary-General.

The Council held a public meeting on 5 June a which it adopted a presidential statement in whic members of the Council condemned the acts o intimidation and unfounded public statements agains MONUC, in particular attempts by RCD-Goma t "ban" the Special Representative of the Secretary General and the "expulsion" of several MONU personnel. The members of the Council stressed tha those unjustifiable attacks were directly contrary to th process of peace and national reconciliation. The reiterated their condemnation of the killings an attacks against civilians that followed the events of 1 May in Kisangani. The Council held RCD-Gom responsible for bringing an end to all extrajudicia executions, human rights violations and arbitrar harassment of civilians. The Council demanded tha RCD-Goma immediately cease its harassment o United Nations officials and assist with the deploymer and operations of MONUC, cooperate with al investigations of violence in Kisangani, and compl with all relevant resolutions of the Security Council, i particular by demilitarizing Kisangani. The Counc called upon Rwanda to use its influence to have RCD Goma meet without delay all its obligations under th resolutions of the Security Council and the statement o its President.

On 11 June Council members held a privat meeting with the MONUC troop-contributin countries. The Council and the troop-contributin

countries were briefed by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and head of MONUC, Amos Namanga Ngongi. The members of the Council had a constructive exchange of views with the representatives of troop-contributing countries participating in the meeting.

On 12 June Council members held consultations that were attended by the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General. Council members were briefed by the Special Representative on the latest developments. The Council discussed a draft resolution on the extension of the mandate of MONUC until 30 June 2003.

On 14 June the Council held a formal meeting at which it adopted resolution 1417 (2002), by which it decided to extend the mandate of MONUC until 30 June 2003.

Sierra Leone

The members of the Council held consultations on 13 June, at which they heard a presentation by the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Sierra Leone, Alan Doss, on the situation following the elections.

During the consultations members of the Council expressed their satisfaction at the success of the election process in Sierra Leone. They stated that they were looking forward to the Secretary-General's fourteenth interim report, which would review the challenges of the next stage and would contain recommendations on the role to be assumed by the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone.

Somalia

At the consultations on 18 June the Council members were briefed by the Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator, Carolyn McAskie, on the humanitarian situation in Somalia, which she had just visited. The members of the Council held wide-ranging discussions on the question of Somalia. Following the discussions the President issued a statement to the press in which members of the Council expressed their deep concern about the humanitarian situation in Somalia, including in the northern parts of the Gedo region where successive waves of fighting had caused outflows of refugees and large numbers of casualties. Members of the Council expressed concern at the situation of the refugees along the borders with neighbouring countries and urged those countries to live up to their international obligations to move refugees away from border areas. Members of the Council underlined the interlinkages between the humanitarian situation and the efforts for peace in Somalia and condemned the renewed violence that was undermining the peace process in the country. Members of the Council expressed deep concern about the continuing and destabilizing flow of weapons and ammunition supplies to Somalia from other countries and expressed their determination to generate independent information on violations of the arms embargo established by resolution 733 (1992).

Western Sahara

As agreed by member States, Council members met at the expert level on 13 June with representatives of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Political Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat.

The representatives of the two Departments presented a commentary on developments in the situation in Western Sahara and the tasks of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara, and they responded to the observations and questions of the representatives of the members of the Council. It is useful to point out that the experts from member States focused in their interventions on the options described in the Secretary-General's report of 19 February 2002 (S/2002/178) on the situation concerning Western Sahara.

Asia

Afghanistan

At its informal consultations on 7 June the Council heard a briefing by the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Kieran Prendergast, that focused on the arrangements being made to convene the Loya Jirga, the significance of this event, the results it would have and the efforts being made by the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan for the convening of the meeting. The Under-Secretary-General also reviewed the security situation and the challenges of the reconstruction and development process. Following the consultations, the President

issued a press statement in which members of the Council welcomed the arrangements being made to convene the Emergency Loya Jirga, congratulated the Loya Jirga Commission on its preparation and organization of the gathering, commended the role played by the Afghan Interim Administration, and called on the Afghan people and their leaders across the country to work together within the framework of the Bonn Agreement to build democratic institutions and to prepare in due course for national elections. Members of the Council shared the concern expressed by the Under-Secretary-General in his briefing about the shortfall in funding for the election process, the meetings of the Loya Jirga, the urgent humanitarian situation and the formation of the Afghan national army, and they appealed to the international community to contribute urgently to making up the shortfall.

On 21 June the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Syrian Arab Republic, Farouk Al-Shara', presided over a public meeting held to hear a briefing by the Under-Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan, in which he focused on the results of the Emergency Loya Jirga. The Under-Secretary-General counted the meeting of the Loya Jirga a success, owing to the fact that it had been held at all, because it had accomplished what it had been mandated to accomplish under the Bonn Agreement and because Afghans had been able to gather together peacefully, to debate and ultimately to agree on fundamental questions regarding their common political future. The Under-Secretary-General also addressed security and humanitarian issues and the reconstruction and development process.

Following the public meeting, the members of the Council held consultations. The President then delivered a statement to the press in which members of the Council welcomed the successful conclusion of the Loya Jirga and the inauguration of President Hamed Karzai as Head of the new Transitional Administration. Members of the Council paid warm tribute to the Afghan people and their leaders for such a large and peaceful gathering so soon after the Interim Administration took office and to the efforts of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in helping to ensure a secure environment in which the Loya Jirga could be held. They looked forward to a formal Council response very soon.

At a public meeting held on 26 June the Council adopted resolution 1419 (2002), in which it welcomed the successful holding of the Emergency Loya Jirga, the wide participation in it, the election of the Head of State and the establishment of the Transitional Authority. It reiterated its strong support for the Transitional Authority in the full implementation of the Bonn Agreement, commended the role of the United Nations system and the contribution of ISAF, and called upon donor countries that had pledged financial aid at the Tokyo conference to fulfil their commitments promptly.

Iraq

On 6 June Council members held a meeting with the Executive Chairman of the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC), Hans Blix, who introduced his ninth quarterly report under paragraph 12 of resolution 1284 (1999) (S/2002/606) and described the tasks carried out by the Commission in recent months. Members of the Council stressed the need for UNMOVIC to continue to train inspectors for their tasks. A number of speakers expressed confidence that UNMOVIC would complete the tasks assigned to it by resolution 1409 (2002). Delegations reaffirmed their well-known positions with respect to resolution 1284 (1999) and their understanding of it.

At consultations held on 19 June Council members discussed the situation between Iraq and Kuwait. The high-level Coordinator, Yuli M. Vorontsov, introduced the report of the Secretary-General on the item (S/2002/664). He stated that the Governments of Iraq and Kuwait had agreed to reactivate the mechanism employed in 1991 for the return of Kuwaiti property and archives, and he stressed the anticipated role of the League of Arab States in addressing the matter. The members of the Council who made statements welcomed the Secretary-General's report and supported the reactivation of the mechanism adopted in 1991. As a result of the discussions, the members of the Council agreed to issue a statement to the press that was delivered by the President of the Council, in which it was stated that members of the Council took note of Iraq's readiness to return Kuwait's national archives through a United Nations mechanism that would include the League of Arab States. Members of the Council expressed their support for the work of the high-level Coordinator and stressed the importance of dialogue between Ambassador Vorontsov and the Government of Iraq.

They also welcomed the recommendations in this regard contained in the communiqué of the Beirut Arab Summit. Members of the Council agreed with the Secretary-General's observations that the complete return of all Kuwaiti property would lead to this humanitarian issue being brought to closure. They strongly urged the Government of Iraq to make further efforts regarding all remaining Kuwaiti property in its possession.

At the consultations of 24 June the Chairman of the Security Council Committee established by resolution 661 (1990), Ambassador Ole Peter Kolby, spoke about the need to address the question of the financial crisis facing the oil-for-food programme. A number of representatives of member States made statements, stressing the need to address this question and proposing to continue the meetings of experts to discuss the best way to overcome existing obstacles. One delegation indicated that it was preparing a paper on the pricing of Iraqi oil and suggested that members of the Council should study it carefully and submit their proposals to the experts of the Committee at a meeting to be held later.

The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question

On 6 June the members of the Council held consultations in which they discussed ongoing developments in the Middle East in response to the request of the Permanent Observer of Palestine that it consider the tense situation in the occupied Palestinian territories. Members of the Council stressed the need for compliance with the relevant Security Council resolutions and for action to achieve a just and comprehensive peace in the region.

On 13 June the Council held a public meeting on the situation in the Middle East in response to a letter from the Permanent Representative of Bahrain to the United Nations requesting, on behalf of the Arab Group, that an immediate meeting be convened to consider the grave and deteriorating situation in the occupied Palestinian territories, including Jerusalem. Thirty-five speakers participated in the meeting, including the 15 members of the Security Council. In their statements, representatives expressed concern at the deteriorating situation in the region, stressed the need for international efforts to focus on devising a political solution in order to reach a peaceful settlement, and called upon the Security Council to meet its responsibility to achieve a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East in accordance with the relevant resolutions.

On 20 June the Council held a private meeting under the presidency of the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Syrian Arab Republic. At the commencement of the meeting the Secretary-General gave a briefing in which he stated that the situation in the Middle East was dangerously unstable and that the political, security and economic dimensions of the problem were today much worse than they had been at any time since 1967. The Secretary-General then identified what he called the basic issues that formed the core of the conflict in the Middle East.

In his briefing, the Secretary-General pointed out the need to achieve a just, lasting and comprehensive peace on all tracks of the peace process in the Middle East, that such a peace must be based on the land-for-peace formula, and that this required progress to be made on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks as well as the Israeli-Palestinian track. The text of the Secretary-General's briefing was circulated.

Speaking in his capacity as the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic, the Minister referred to the preoccupation of the Security Council with addressing the situation in the Middle East and his country's understanding of the Council's importance and the tasks entrusted to it under the Charter of the United Nations. He then reviewed the history of developments and events in the region and the reasons why international efforts to achieve a just and comprehensive peace in the region had failed.

Mr. Al-Shara' stated that it had been Syria's acceptance of the United States initiative launched by the administration of President George Bush in 1991 that had made it possible for the Madrid peace conference to be convened in November that year. He then spoke of the Arab peace initiative endorsed by the Beirut Summit, which had received widespread international support and had been welcomed by the United States of America, the European Union and the Russian Federation. The Quartet in its joint statement of 10 April 2002 (S/2002/369) had also welcomed it as "a significant contribution towards a comprehensive peace, including Syria and Lebanon".

Mr. Al-Shara' concluded by affirming the need to achieve a comprehensive peace that would bring security and stability to all parties.

At the request of one of the members and with the agreement of the Council, the full text of the Minister's statement was circulated as a Security Council document.

Members of the Security Council welcomed the fact that Mr. Al-Shara' had presided at the private meeting, and they affirmed that the presentation he had given of Syria's position with respect to all aspects of the situation in the Middle East had been useful. They also expressed satisfaction with the Secretary-General's briefing. In their statements, all members of the Council reviewed all aspects of the dangerous situation in the region and the positions of their countries in its regard. The Minister responded to their observations and questions.

Europe and the Balkans

Cyprus

On 5 June the Council held a private meeting with the countries contributing troops to the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP). The Security Council and the troop-contributing countries heard a briefing by the Director of the Europe and Latin America Division of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations.

On 11 June the Security Council held consultations at which it heard a briefing by the Acting Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Chief of the United Nations Mission in Cyprus, Zbigniew Wlosowicz. Members called upon the parties concerned to make further efforts to achieve the goal of resolving the Cyprus issue. The delegation of the United Kingdom introduced a draft resolution on the extension of the mandate of UNFICYP.

The President of the Security Council met with the four parties involved in the dispute in Cyprus on 11 June and delivered the draft resolution to them. He heard their comments on the draft resolution and their concerns in this regard, and he transmitted them to the Council at its consultations on the following day.

On 13 June the Council held a formal meeting at which it considered the draft resolution on the extension of the mandate of UNFICYP for a further period ending 15 December 2002. It adopted the draft resolution by consensus (15 votes in favour) as resolution 1416 (2002).

Kosovo, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia

The Security Council held a public meeting on 26 June on Kosovo, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, at which the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations gave a briefing on the latest developments in the situation there. He spoke of the establishment of inclusive provisional institutions of self-government in Kosovo. He indicated that the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) had continued to work with the provisional institutions of self-government to ensure that those bodies respected the division between reserved and transferred responsibilities. He stated that the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of UNMIK, Michael Steiner, had issued guidelines for agreements of the provisional institutions of self-government with Governments and with international organizations.

Members of the Council expressed satisfaction with the additional steps and measures taken by UNMIK to enhance the rule of law, prevent smuggling and combat organized and transnational crime. They stated that they looked forward to the municipal elections to be held in Kosovo in October 2002, which would have a positive impact on political, economic and social life there and would enhance the representation of all factions, ethnic groups and minorities.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

On 13 June the Council held a private meeting with countries contributing troops to the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH). The Council and the troop-contributing countries heard a briefing by the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Hédi Annabi.

On 19 June, at the request of a Member of the United Nations, the Security Council held a public meeting to consider the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Council heard a briefing by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Coordinator of United Nations Operations in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Jacques Paul Klein, on the latest developments in the situation in Bosnia and

Herzegovina. He stated that UNMIBH was continuing to make great progress in the implementation of its mandate. UNMIBH was on the point of successfully completing its core mandate even as Bosnia and Herzegovina continued to require the support and attention of the international community. He said that peace alone did not suffice in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and serious problems were appearing — in particular with regard to criminality and corruption — which posed fundamental challenges to the country's ability to develop and to the maintenance of its stability.

The Council adjourned for consultations so as to complete its deliberations. Bulgaria introduced a draft resolution on the extension of the mandate of UNMIBH until 15 December 2002.

In view of the fact that there was no consensus on the relationship between peacekeeping operations and the role of the International Criminal Court and given that the mandate of UNMIBH was to expire on 21 June 2002, the Council adopted at a formal meeting held on 21 June a technical resolution extending the mandate of the Mission until 30 June 2002 (resolution 1418 (2002)).

When it became clear that it would be difficult to reach an agreement at this point of the discussions, the members of the Council held consultations on 27 June, twice on 28 June and once again on 30 June in an attempt to devise a consensus solution. The outcome of the consultations was that the members of the Council agreed to vote on the draft resolution introduced by Bulgaria.

The Council held a formal meeting on 30 June at which the draft resolution in question was put to a vote. The Council did not, however, adopt the draft resolution owing to the negative vote of a permanent member. This meeting was attended by the Secretary-General, and he delivered a statement after the vote in which he stressed the importance of peacekeeping operations and appealed to member States to continue consultations at the highest levels and in capitals in order to reach agreement on this matter.

Directly following the formal meeting at which the vote was taken, the members of the Council held consultations in order to continue consideration of what steps should be taken to extend the mandate of UNMIBH, due to expire on 30 June 2002. On completion of these consultations the Council held a formal meeting at which it adopted resolution 1420 (2002) extending the mandate of the Mission until 3 July 2002.

Counter-terrorism

On 27 June the Council held a public meeting at which it heard a briefing by the Chairman of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1373 (2001) concerning counter-terrorism, Jeremy Greenstock, on the work of the Committee over the past nine months and on its work programme for the fourth 90-day period. Ambassador Greenstock stated that the Committee would focus in the coming period on reviewing the further implementation by States of resolution 1373 (2001) and on considering the second, supplementary reports submitted by States on the basis of the questions addressed to them by the Committee's experts. He stated that the Committee would be in close contact with potential providers of assistance in the fields covered by the resolution and expressed gratitude for the practical support the Committee was receiving from the Secretariat in the translation of documentation and the provision of services for meetings.

Members of the Security Council spoke, as did some of the chairmen of the regional groupings, namely the representative of Spain (on behalf of the European Union), the representative of Costa Rica (on behalf of the Rio Group countries), and the representative of Brunei Darussalam (on behalf of the ASEAN countries). All speakers expressed appreciation for the work of the Committee and what it had achieved in the time that had elapsed. They stressed that it was important for countries that had not yet submitted their reports to do so as quickly as possible. Some delegations encouraged dialogue with international and regional organizations. A number of speakers stressed the need for respect for human rights and for compliance with international law and the Charter of the United Nations in taking any measures to combat terrorism, and delegations urged the Committee to assist States needing aid in specific fields in their efforts to implement resolution 1373 (2001).

Working group on documentation and procedures

The informal working group on documentation and procedures held a meeting on 20 June at which it discussed ongoing preparations for the convening of a wrap-up session of the Council and the paper prepared by the President on the form and substance of such a session. The results of the meeting were contained in the note verbale of 25 June 2002 (S/2002/701), which established the manner in which the session should be conducted and the time to be allocated to participating countries for their comments. It stipulated that statements should analyse the manner in which the Council had addressed the matters on its agenda and that interventions should not be restatements by those countries of their positions on the matters in question. The note identified four topics for special focus, namely, the situation in Afghanistan, the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the situation in the Middle East, and the situation in Somalia. The document prepared by the President of the Council for the month of June on the proceedings of the wrap-up session held on 28 June 2002 was circulated in document S/2002/759 of 16 July 2002.